

# **The Franklin County Comprehensive Strategic Justice Plan CY 2010 - 2012**



*Presented By:*

*The Franklin County Criminal Justice and Community Corrections Planning Boards*

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## **FRANKLIN COUNTY CRIMINAL JUSTICE & COMMUNITY PLANNING BOARDS MEMBERS**

### **Members**

Hon. Michael B. Coleman, Columbus City Mayor  
Hon. John O'Grady, Franklin County Commissioner  
Hon. Ted Barrows, Franklin County Municipal Court  
Hon. Christopher Geer, Franklin County Juvenile Court  
Hon. Daniel Hogan, Common Pleas Administrative Judge  
Hon. Ronald O'Brien, Franklin County Prosecutor  
Hon. Richard C. Pfeiffer, Columbus City Attorney  
Hon. Andrew Ginther, Columbus City Council  
Hon. Eric Brown, Common Pleas Judge  
Hon. Lori Tyack, Clerk of Municipal Court  
Hon. James A. Karnes, Franklin County Sheriff  
Hon. Harvey Minton, Worthington City Mayor  
Suzanne Coleman Tolbert, Job Leaders  
Kevin P. Clark, Municipal Probation  
Denise Robinson, Alvis House President & CEO  
Cindi Gibson, Common Pleas Adult Probation  
Walter Distelweig, Columbus City Police Chief  
David Royer, Franklin County ADAMH  
Gayle Dittmer, Adult Probation Services  
Yeura Venters, Franklin County Public Defender  
Bud Potter, Community-Based Corrections  
Bishop Marshall, Community Representative  
Allen Smith, Ph.D., Community Representative  
Marcia White, Community Representative

### **Alternates:**

George Speaks, Columbus City Asst. Safety Director

Jane McKenzie, Franklin County Prosecutor's Office  
Anne Murray, Director, Columbus City Attys. Office

Stephan Martin, Franklin County Chief Deputy

Richard A. Bash, Columbus City Police Commander

Molly Robbins, Community-Based Corrections

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## **INTRODUCTION**

**The mission of the Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board is to provide system-wide comprehensive planning and oversight, identify training and technical assistance needs and direct the efficient and effective application of State and Federal funds toward developing and sustaining projects and programs that deliver services to the Franklin County community to enhance their health, safety, and welfare.**

**The Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board was created in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Chapter 5502 in April 2000 as a required outcome of the election by the City of Columbus and Franklin County to form a Regional Planning Unit for Criminal Justice Services. The Board consists of members representing the criminal and juvenile justice arena including law enforcement, courts, probation/parole, victims, victim services, corrections, juvenile, community, faith-based, crime prevention, public defenders, prosecutors, education, the Mayor of the City of Columbus and the Board of Franklin County Commissioners.**

**The Board is responsible for comprehensive regional justice planning and directing the justice mission of the Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs. The Franklin County Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs performs the fiscal and programmatic administration of Department of Justice and Department of Homeland Security grants; provides training and technical assistance for the justice partners and first responders; and is responsible for the development and evaluation of projects and programs operating in accordance with the Franklin County Comprehensive Strategic Justice Plan and the Homeland Security Strategy.**

**The Board developed the “Franklin County Comprehensive Strategic Justice Plan” to identify major emphasis areas of concentration within each discipline to enhance efficiency and improve the delivery of justice services in Franklin County. The Plan is revised and updated annually and published every two years to include impact accomplishments and address emerging trends and conditions that affect Franklin County’s justice delivery system.**

**The Homeland Security Strategy was developed by the Homeland Security Advisory Committee and is aligned with the State of Ohio’s Homeland Security Strategy. The Strategy is updated annually to identify progress toward meeting the National Preparedness Framework and to define the implementation steps necessary to support the Urban Area in achieving the required target capabilities. The Strategy is written in an all-hazards approach to identify on-going efforts to provide organizing, planning, training, exercising, and equipment to secure critical infrastructure, provide personal protection, improve communications, promote interoperability, and prepare our citizens. The Homeland Security Strategy is a sensitive document protected under the Homeland Security Act and Ohio Revised Code Section 149.43 so is therefore referred to in general terms herein.**

**The Franklin County Comprehensive Strategic Justice Plan and the Homeland Security Strategy are live documents that will remain strategic to allow for the implementation of priority projects as trends and conditions emerge and new initiatives are developed to meet the demand for change within the delivery system.**

## **THE STRATEGIC JUSTICE PLAN**

**Franklin County receives approximately fifteen (15) million dollars in federal grant initiatives each calendar year. The federal justice block grant funds are disbursed through a competitive grant process administered by the Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs. Regional Homeland Security funds are awarded by the State of Ohio through a formula process at the State level and Franklin County's Urban Area Security Initiative funds are disbursed through a comprehensive funding process and non-binding recommendation of the appointed Homeland Security Advisory Council and administered by the Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs.**

**The State Office of Criminal Justice Services sub grants to Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs, the S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act grant program for regional administration. Under the direction of the Ohio Department of Youth Services, the Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs administers the Juvenile Accountability and Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention Title II block grant programs. The Justice Assistance Grant (JAG) is a discretionary grant passed directly from the Department of Justice (DOJ) to Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs. Each of these grants has a competitive open application period once a year and operates on a continuing basis for a minimum of twelve months. Federal and State Directives are established for each grant, each year, and passed through to the local level for implementation.**

**Franklin County's five competitive justice block grants provide funding for a wide variety of projects and programs including crime prevention, victim services, local law enforcement assistance, juvenile delinquency prevention, law enforcement task forces, technology integration and information sharing, alternatives to corrections, substance abuse treatment, and innovative programs operated within**

**the justice disciplines. Applications for projects and programs that impact the major emphasis areas identified by discipline for law enforcement, courts, probation/parole, victim services, crime prevention, juvenile, corrections, and courts will be given priority funding. The Board will focus on the major emphasis areas in each of the justice disciplines as funding plans are developed within the guidelines of the block grant initiatives.**

**Common major emphasis themes throughout all justice disciplines include the lack of mental health and substance abuse treatment programs, the need for alternatives to incarceration, a demand for system and technology integration, inadequate funding to meet system demands, and most prevalent, the need for cultural understanding training and language interpretation services. The Board will continue to focus research, evaluation and planning efforts on these identified priority areas in the 2006 programming year.**

**In addition, the Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board has established the following local directives to support identified major emphasis areas in accordance with the Franklin County Comprehensive Strategic Justice Plan:**

- Applications for youth programs operating after school, Saturdays, or during the summer must include a nutritious breakfast, lunch or hot supper for all Low Moderate Income (LMI) children participating in the program. Applicants will be required to work with the Children's Hunger Alliance to qualify their program site for services.**
- Training and technical assistance programs will be developed and administered by the Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs to address needs identified in the major emphasis areas of**

**the Franklin County Comprehensive Strategic Justice Plan. Attendance will be mandatory for affected personnel funded through the Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs.**

- Projects and programs funded through the Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs are required to submit written minutes (including attendance) of their Collaborative Board meetings along with their quarterly fiscal and programmatic reports.**
- S.T.O.P. Violence Against Women Act sub-grantees are required to attend and participate in quarterly meetings of the Franklin County Violence Against Women Advisory Board.**
- Crime Prevention projects and programs funded through the Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs are required to have local law enforcement as a working partner in their project and represented on their Collaborative Board.**
- Justice projects and programs funded through the Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs must participate in the Commissioner's Annual Justice Exposition to promote public awareness, facilitate networking and collaboration between justice disciplines and provide the opportunity for evaluation by members of the Franklin County Criminal Justice Planning Board.**

**Under the direction of the Ohio Emergency Management Agency the Office of Homeland Security & Justice Programs administers the Columbus Urban Area Security Initiative grant program. The Columbus Urban Area Security Initiative grant provides funding to plan, equip, train, and exercise Franklin County's First Responders. Based on the Columbus Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy**



**developed by the Franklin County Homeland Security Advisory Council, funding is prioritized based on identified threat, risk and need.**

**Crossing the ten First Responder disciplines of administration, public health, emergency management, fire, EMS, law enforcement, HazMat/DeCon, health care, public works, and public information, grant funds are applied to meet regional goals to prevent, respond to, and recover from disaster in an all-hazards approach.**

**The Homeland Security Advisory Council will continuously update and refine the Columbus Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy to reflect accomplished implementation steps, assess progress toward completion of goals, and address current trends and conditions in accordance with Homeland Security efforts at the federal, State, and Local levels.**

**The Homeland Security Advisory Council has developed the following local directives for the Urban Area Security Initiative funds:**

- All funding requests must be Regional in application.**
- All projects must be in accordance with the Goals of the Columbus Urban Area Homeland Security Strategy.**
- The CEO of the political sub-division must approve the request for equipment and accept all on-going costs including maintenance, licenses, insurance, etc.**
- Projects will be funded in full or in part based on identified threat, risk, and need priority.**

## **JUSTICE DISCIPLINES**

➔ **CORRECTIONS**

➔ **COURTS**

➔ **CRIME PREVENTION**

➔ **HOMELAND SECURITY**

➔ **JUVENILE**

➔ **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

➔ **PROBATION/PAROLE**

➔ **PROSECUTION**

➔ **PUBLIC DEFENDER**

➔ **VICTIM SERVICES**

## **CORRECTIONS**

### **Major Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Provide cultural understanding training to corrections personnel to promote diverse cultural competency and reduce communication barriers through the employment of language interpretation services.**
- b) Reduce the burden on corrections by increasing the use of alternatives to incarceration.**
- c) Lead efforts to address the issue of jail overcrowding.**
- d) Fund projects and programs that are evidence-based best practice models.**

### **Additional Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Address the lack of in-patient services for offenders requiring psychiatric care.**
- b) Establish mental health and dual diagnosis medical services for offenders.**
- c) Develop a pre-trial release system for specialized populations.**

## **COURTS**

### **Major Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Continue to address the inefficiencies of courtroom facilities, transportation between jail and court, public defender, assignment, and administrative processes.**
- b) Increase the options and flexibility of treatment programs to allow offenders to maintain employment and meet childcare demands.**
- c) Proffer short and long term solutions for jail overcrowding.**

### **Additional Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Address the staffing reductions and increased demand for Pre-Sentence Investigations (PSI).**
- b) Provide cultural understanding training and programs to promote diverse cultural competency and reduce communication barriers through the employment of language interpretation services for prosecutors and public defenders.**
- c) Develop programs to support alternative sentencing options for special offender populations including mental health/dual diagnosis, substance abuse and medically disadvantaged and/or indigent.**
- d) Evaluate the impact of the following issues on the judicial system:**
  - Children in courtrooms**
  - Imbalance of minority representation**
  - Environmental conditions impact on crime**
  - Overburden of drug cases**
  - Repeated court appearances leading to loss of victim/witness participation**
  - Pre-trial release**
  - 24 hour Clerk of Courts for Common Pleas or Clerks in Courtroom**
  - Defendant orientation**
  - Program costs for indigent families**
- e) Propose video arraignment for the new Courthouse to reduce the burden on prosecutors, courts and corrections and improve the safety and security of the arraignment process.**

## **CRIME PREVENTION**

### **Major Emphasis Areas:**

- a) **Demand accountability from parents and juveniles for acts of delinquency.**
- b) **Develop evaluation instruments for crime prevention projects to determine effectiveness of programs and identify best practice models for replication.**
- c) **Require collaboration with law enforcement in all funded crime prevention projects.**

### **Additional Emphasis Areas:**

- a) **Require crime prevention projects to maintain a working collaborative composed of multi-disciplined partners.**
- b) **Promote community sanctions as alternatives in sentencing.**
- c) **Strengthen the safety net program for senior citizen victims of crime.**



## **HOMELAND SECURITY**

### **Major Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Enhance regional Improvised Explosive Device (IED) detection and response capabilities.**
- b) Increase protection of Critical Infrastructure (CI), Key Resources (KR), and Financial Resources (FR) through identification and inclusion in Automated Critical Asset Management Systems (ACAMS) as designated by the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP).**
- c) Implement Homeland Security training programs developed by the Office of Domestic Preparedness (ODP) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in a multi-disciplined, multi-jurisdictional approach.**
- d) Work toward meeting the National Preparedness Framework through compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS), National Infrastructure Protection Plan (NIPP), and National Response Plan (NRP).**
- e) Strengthen citizen preparedness and increase citizen participation through Citizens Corps and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) programs.**
- f) Improve regional planning for emergency evacuation and receiving dislocated persons from outside affected areas.**
- g) Enhance Information Sharing, Intelligence Gathering by expanding the Terrorism Early Warning Group (TEWG) and co-locating Terrorism Early Warning Group with Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF) and State Fusion center.**

## **JUVENILE**

### **Major Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Development of family based prevention and probation programs.**
- b) To promote and foster accountability from parents and youth for acts of delinquency.**
- c) Create programs to serve special juvenile populations including sexually violent offenders, homeless youth, and juvenile offenders deemed mentally incompetent.**
- d) Address the Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) issues within the juvenile justice system.**
- e) Develop response programs to address juveniles involved in youth gang related violence.**

### **Additional Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Eliminate the duplication of services provided for juveniles.**
- b) Reduce the burden on the traditional juvenile justice system by increasing the use of community diversion programs.**

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

### **Major Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Promote integration of justice technology to facilitate interagency communication and information sharing. Phase III is currently under way funded by Urban Area Security Initiative.**
- b) Provide cultural understanding training to promote diverse cultural competency and reduce communication barriers through the employment of language interpretation services.**
- c) Develop pro-active interventions and response plans for violent juvenile gang activity.**
- d) Proffer long and short term solutions for jail overcrowding.**

### **Additional Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Continue to develop regional collaborations between federal, state, and local law enforcement to support prevention, protection, response, and recovery from all-hazard incidents.**
- b) Address neighborhood quality of life complaints of local citizens including graffiti, noise, and speed violations.**
- c) Reduce D.U.I. (Driving Under Impairment) repeat offenders.**

## **PROBATION/PAROLE**

### **Major Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Reduce caseload on probation/parole officers.**
- b) Increase social services available to qualified offenders including but not limited to: Assessment Services, Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Treatment Services, Mental Health Treatment Services, Co-occurring Disorder Treatment Services, and Medical Services which continue to be reduced in the community.**
- c) Increase general fund allocation for probation departments.**
- d) Reduce communication barriers through the employment of language interpretation services and provide required forms in multi languages.**
- e) Improve communication and collaboration between probation/parole and Courts, law enforcement, Prosecutors, other public service agencies and community resource agencies that provide services to probationers.**
- f) Provide assistance in the development and expansion of alternatives to incarceration, consistent with public safety, to address long and short term solutions for jail overcrowding.**
- g) Implement “evidence-based practices” in offender supervision in an effort to reduce recidivism.**
- h) Improve information technology to allow for increased efficiency in case management and offer the opportunity to compile necessary information to determine areas of need and accomplishments.**

### **Additional Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Increase officer safety through training and issuance of emergency communication devices.**
- b) Provide cultural understanding training to promote diverse cultural competency.**
- c) Increase the utilization of pre-trial services.**
- d) Improve tracking of defendants to provide reliable recidivism information.**

## **PROSECUTION**

### **Major Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Promote the integration of justice technology to facilitate case management, ensure the delivery of comprehensive services, and facilitate communication between agencies.**
- b) Reduce the current violent crimes caseload per prosecutor and provide specialized prosecutors to promote victim cooperation in the prosecution of violent crimes.**

### **Additional Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Provide cultural understanding training for law enforcement and prosecutors that promotes diverse cultural competency.**
- b) Reduce communication barriers through the employment of language interpretation services.**



## **PUBLIC DEFENDER**

### **Major Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Promote cultural competency among staff to improve delivery of service to cultural diverse populations, and work collaboratively with key stakeholders within the juvenile and adult criminal justice systems to continue to promote fairness within the judicial system, reduce disproportionate minority contacts within both systems, and support offender reentry initiatives to successfully transition ex-offenders back into the community and help them live crime free productive lives.**
- b) Provide continued staff development to improve professional competency and increase staff awareness of changing legislation and social policy trends which could adversely impact the population that we serve.**
- c) Ensure professional and support services are adequately staffed to address increasing caseloads.**
- d) Promote inter-agency collaboration countywide, and utilize new information technology and improved telecommunication services to enhance office efficiency.**

### **Additional Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Continue to monitor the statistical impact new sexual offender laws which retroactively reclassify sex offenders, increase mandatory penalties and impose greater restrictions on registration and notification (SORN – sex offenders registration & notification) will have on our client population; and to identify any additional staffing and office space needs due to increases in the number of trials, classification hearings, appeals, and time needed for trial preparation.**
- b) Participate in county, state, and local initiatives to identify community justice needs and recommend systemic change to maximize the use of county resources to address those needs.**
- c) Develop and distribute Public Defender information pamphlets in Somali and Spanish to those within our community who do not speak English, to increase awareness of our program and the services we provide.**

## **VICTIM SERVICES**

### **Major Emphasis Areas:**

- a) Increase funding for victim services and direct funding to appropriate and effective victim service projects.**
  - b) Develop and promote a safe reporting method for family members experiencing violence in the home.**
  - c) Create specialized victim service programs for youth with emphasis on youth who are witnesses to criminal violence.**
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- a) Coordinate provider services to deliver a comprehensive service plan to victims.**
  - b) Develop the role of victim advocates in the probation department to address victim notification, restitution, and offender violations.**
  - c) Provide cultural understanding training for advocates and staff that promotes diverse cultural competency.**
  - d) Reduce communication barriers through the employment of multi-lingual staff or language interpretation services.**

**ADDENDUM**

**TO THE**

**FRANKLIN COUNTY COMPRHENSIVE, STRATEGIC JUSTICE PLAN**

**CULTURAL COMPETENCE**  
**DEFINED, OBJECTIVES AND GOALS**

## CULTURAL COMPETENCE

**Cultural competence** is defined as the development of "*a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enable that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.*"

### **Objective:**

- 1) To build bridges of understanding and promote inter-cultural harmony
- 2) To develop targeted outreach programs that make services available to the segments of our community who are not adequately or fairly served as a result of their race, religion, ethnic, or cultural background.
- 3) Increase the cultural competencies of law enforcement personnel to appreciate the big picture and to better deal with Central Ohio's ever-changing demographic landscape and cultural difference.
- 4) Enhance police safety through culturally sensitive interventions when serving and protecting immigrants, non-English speakers, and in cases of racial and religious tensions.

### **Goals:**

- 1) Develop cultural competency curriculum for the criminal justice system
- 2) Identify specific competence indicators related to each specific discipline within the criminal justice system
- 3) Identify specific barriers that may frustrate the effective implementation of any aspect of the process leading to cultural competency
- 4) Provide foreign language translation and interpretation services
- 5) Provide key foreign language courses

## **MAJOR PROGRAMS**

- **DISPROPORTIONATE MINORITY CONTACT**
- **OFFENDER REENTRY**
- **SUPERVISED VISITATION & SAFE EXCHANGE**



## **Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Initiative**

Franklin County's efforts to address disproportionate minority contacts in the juvenile justice system were initiated in 2005 through a strong collaborative effort of key justice stakeholders led by the United Way of Central Ohio, the Franklin County Office of Homeland Security, the City of Columbus and the Franklin County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court. In 2006, the Ohio Department of Youth Services selected and partnered with 14 juvenile courts, including Franklin County to address DMC.

In September of 2008, The United Way of Central Ohio commissioned the compilation of the *Franklin County, Ohio Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Assessment Report* which has been useful in identification of the "relative rate index" for each of the nine key decision points related to juvenile contacts with the juvenile justice system.

For minority youth and in particular African American and Hispanic, DMC issues exist at all of the seven decision points where data was available. In terms of trends, there was substantial but generally decreasing DMC issues in juvenile arrests, referrals to juvenile court, cases diverted, probation placement; substantial and consistent DMC issues in secure detention, and substantial and increasing issues in secure confinement and transfers/bindovers to adult court. Because referral and detention are sequentially and logically connected to the issue of diversion, all three decision points were selected for initial focus of the initiative.

Based upon the committee's research, community focus groups and the assessment report, recommended interventions include the following:

- a. Target DMC funded programming to serve youth and families in the 43211 and 43205 zip codes areas.
- b. Intervention plan should employ a combination of strategies that provide direct services to youth, training and technical assistance for law enforcement and juvenile justice personnel, and system change that targets policies, procedures and laws.

FY 2008, 2009 and 2010 Title II Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention funding has been dedicated exclusively to addressing DMC. Through a competitive selection process, Directions for Youth & Family and the Columbus Urban League were awarded funds to address decision points three and four which are "cases diverted" and "cases involving secure detention" respectively.

Since the on-set of these programs targeted zip codes areas have been expanded in 2010. Based on the significant number of juveniles referred due to assault and disorderly conduct arrests in Columbus City Schools, new strategies and collaborative programs involving schools, law enforcement and Juvenile Court are being developed.

## REENTRY INITIATIVE

### CY 2009 Accomplishments:

- Creation of by-laws and protocols for the formal operation of the Franklin County Reentry Task Force. **Completed on June, 2009.**
- Compilation and publication of the Directory of Franklin County Adult Reentry Services which provides an inventory of existing programs focused on ex-offenders and reentry. **Completed October 2009.**
- Strength and gap analysis conducted by Community Research Partners. **Completed October 2009.**
- Hiring of part-time Reentry Coordinator, Kysten Palmore. **Hired November, 2009.**
- Drafting of the Franklin County Comprehensive Reentry Task Force Five-Year Strategic Plan. Plan may be accessed and downloaded from the OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY & JUSTICE PROGRAMS website at [www.franklincountyohio.gov/jpu](http://www.franklincountyohio.gov/jpu). **Completed December 2009/January 2010**
- Solidification of working subcommittees with identified co-chairs meeting monthly to target key reentry barriers. The following subcommittees have been established: Employment and Education; Health and Behavioral Health; Housing; Faith, Family and Community; and Street Card Resources.

### Anticipated CY 2010 Activities - Pending activities and goals of the Reentry Task Force:

- Implementation of the ARRA JAG grant deliverables to include:
  - a. competitive selection of case management provider within the jail
  - b. development of tracking forms
  - c. development of protocols for program management
  - d. grants management
  - e. posting of Reentry Coordinator position to transition from a part time consultant position to a full-time County position
  - f. Implementation of Legal Aid Reentry Workshops
- Training and implementation of the Ohio Assessment Tool
- Creation of a profile of future funding opportunities to better position ourselves financially and programmatically. Creation of application profiles to ensure we have projects identified prior to grant release.
- Strategy development, prioritization and implementation of sub-committee strategies and recommendations.
- Creation of marketing outreach campaign specific to potential employers.
- Assistance as requested by the Ohio Bar Association in the development of the Collateral Sanctions database.
- Creation and distribution of street cards for jail, prison and local reentry service provider dissemination.

## **SUPERVISED VISITATION & SAFE EXCHANGE**

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The Buckeye Ranch Visitation and Exchange Program opened its doors and began accepting referrals on September 1, 2009. The Buckeye Ranch Visitation and Exchange Program began accepting referrals from the Domestic Relations Court Judges, expanded the referral base to include Magistrates and are now in the process of accepting referrals from additional resources throughout the community.

The Buckeye Ranch Visitation and Exchange Program has received a steady stream of referrals over the last couple months and are near capacity with the current operating hours. The Buckeye Ranch Visitation and Exchange Program has received referrals for a variety of reasons that include domestic violence, sexual assault, long separation between parent/child, and custody disputes.

To reduce the potential for re-victimization of women and children, The Buckeye Ranch Visitation and Exchange Program provide necessary supportive measures (police officer on duty in the reception area, staggered arrivals/departures of adults) and safety considerations (separate parking lots with security cameras) during child visitation and exchange. The Buckeye Ranch Visitation and Exchange Program is currently operating 14 hours per week with flexible hours which include evening and Sunday hours. A sliding fee scale is used to ensure no family is refused services due to limited income. To foster healthier connections between children and both parents, a variety of enrichment games and activities are available for use by families during their visitations. Services and policies/procedures of the program are grounded in the experiences of survivors/victims. If requested, staff are prepared to provide or research information on other resources such as parenting classes, counseling services and employment, housing and educational opportunities.

The Buckeye Ranch Visitation and Exchange Program is funded through a Justice Assistance Grant and a Violence Against Women's Act Grant. This funding will sustain the program through December 31, 2010. The Buckeye Ranch Visitation and Exchange Program has recently applied for additional funding with the assistance of the Office of Homeland Security and Justice Programming in order to increase operating hours and expand services to an additional location.